

Curtain Drawn Aside

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Summary: When Sarge attempts a rescue, she discovers something she didn't anticipate.

Curtain Drawn Aside

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>This General Fiction (no sub-text) short story is rated PG for violence and
adult themes.

>
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>

>Fortune lies in the hero's life. - Norse wisdom from the Elder Edda

>
Whoever holds the pod controls the underground. That's what Hel had told

>Cleopatra. The pod Sarge tore from Sluggo's chest contains a map of the world
beneath the surface of the earth. Every level. Every corridor. Every trapdoor.

>Everything. The revelation had brought another dated cultural reference from
Cleo that neither Hel nor Mauser understood, yet in her own unique way, she'd

>captured the nearly immeasurable value of such an acquisition to their
continuing struggle for freedom.

>
But as she walked down a murky corridor of this previously unexplored level,

>Sarge reminded herself once again that knowing the map and knowing the actual
terrain were two vastly different things. Yes, her team had the pod, and with it

>the map, but for every level, corridor, and trapdoor they already knew
firsthand, there were a staggering number of each they would

have to explore
>cautiously, and at length, before they could claim any practical knowledge of
the terrain's uses and dangers.
>
So when they weren't completing some objective or resolving some crisis, and
>either she or Hel had time to set off alone, or with Cleo as a curious sidekick,
the team moved closer to eclipsing the unknown in favor of the known. And though
>she found Cleo a good companion on virtually every occasion, explorations
included, Sarge was glad she'd taken this one alone. She hadn't found anything
>but empty corridors and distant echoes since she'd arrived on this level, and
had Cleo been with her, she would have filled the time with chatter that would
>have long since worn thin.

>She'll learn with time, though, Sarge thought, her athletic physique just tense
enough to be on alert, yet still relaxed enough to not be needlessly fatigued.
>To suddenly find herself here five centuries in the future must have been more
of a shock than she ever admitted. Not to mention that her life back then didn't
>exactly prepare her for the war she's now a part of. She's talked about causes
that were important to her then, things she fought for and believed in, but now
>she's in a different jungle with different rules. And it's a good thing we found
her before that traitorous Betrayer attacked the lab. It's bad enough he would
>have blown her away, but those creeps in the lab would have still done their
worst to whatever was left.
>
Her flesh crawled when she thought of the hungry expression on the face of the
>Cat Man who would only give her a new kidney in exchange for something of value.
Not only had he gazed at the unconscious Cleopatra in a way that couldn't
>possibly mask his desires, he'd actually spoken of his intention to use her to
relieve his loneliness.
>
I should've blown him away just for the thought of it, Sarge mused, then she
>stopped at the end of a corridor that intersected with another running
perpendicular. She pressed herself against the smooth wall, ready to raise her
>laser gauntlet at the first sign of a threat, and considered each direction.

>Lingering thoughts of smoke pouring from a feline abdomen were immediately
replaced by the sight of two armed creatures pushing a disheveled woman down a
>corridor some distance away. The creatures were unlike any Sarge had ever seen
or heard about. Dressed in dark gray garments, they had nearly featureless white
>faces capped by shining silver domes, and blood red slits for eyes.

>Sarge stepped back, brought up a three-dimensional map of the level on her other
gauntlet, and saw that she was standing to the right of a series of short
>parallel corridors, all of which led to a single long corridor, the only
entrance to a natural cavern of considerable size. The map dissolved as Sarge
>lowered the gauntlet, her memory of the immediate area now fine-tuned by what
she'd just seen.
>
Time to collect some details, she thought. She stepped around

the corner, the
>rate of her heart twice the pace of her footsteps, and walked
cautiously to the
turn where the three had disappeared.

>
There she found a short corridor leading to the one that stood
as the top
>connector to the parallel corridors. With only part of her face and
a single eye
peeking around the corner, she saw that the two
creatures and the woman were
>being led by a third creature in similar garb, and that the woman,
while
not putting up any noticeable struggle, was being taken
wherever the others
>wanted her to go. She wasn't being dragged or violently shoved, but
the curses
directed at her from behind were enough to make Sarge
think that if she had been
>able to fight back, she would never have endured such abuse.

>There was a time, she thought, as the four turned into the final
corridor before
the cavern, when I would have left this woman to
whatever these creeps have in
>store for her. I don't like to admit it, even to myself, and it's
not that I
wouldn't have felt for her plight, but our objective
to regain the surface would
>have had me focused on that alone. But now, thanks to Cleo's
insistence that
we're "heroes" who should stand up for those who
can't stand up for themselves,
>there's always something that I or any of us can do. Regaining the
surface is
still our top priority, but there is something about
seeing the consequences of
>my other actions that's irreplaceable, especially since I might not
live to see
our victory over the Bailies.
>
She suddenly had a thought that could have been Hel's own. When
Cleo called us
>heroes, she drew aside a curtain we can never close completely.

>Then she smiled viciously as she reached the final turn and watched
the four
walking ahead of her. And just so I don't end up as
philosophical as Hel, this
>may also give me a chance to blast some creeps after hours of
walking empty
corridors. I'll lay down some cover fire that will
give her a chance to run,
>then I'll nail those three if they retaliate, which they probably
will since
nobody lays down cover fire like I do.
>
Sarge stepped into the corridor and fired several shots directly
above the heads
>of the four. Each turned as the two creatures bringing up the rear
returned
fire. But the moment Sarge saw the laser weapons come
up, she triggered her
>force field, which harmlessly deflected the attack while not
preventing her
precisely aimed shots from disarming, then felling
each attacker in a shower of
>sparks. The creature leading the group would have been taken out as
well had it
not been for the woman standing directly in his path.
Sarge wouldn't risk
>hitting the innocent, so she walked slowly toward them as the
creature grabbed
the woman from behind and dragged her away,
firing a weapon he'd drawn from his
>belt.

>To conserve her force field, Sarge shut it down and used her agility
to evade
the shots triggered by the unpracticed hand. She'd run

too many evasive
>exercises with the skilled Hel not to recognize that her lone
attacker was
counting on intimidation to compensate for his poor
aim.
>
Maybe I can still take him out, she thought, eyeing his exposed
shoulder as she
>tried to picture just how far from the natural cavern they were. Her
peripheral
vision was sharp, and she could see that the corridor
beyond turned slightly
>before it continued, but she didn't know how far beyond that turn
the cavern
was, or how close reinforcements might be. So the
moment her attacker's attempt
>to aim his weapon for an accurate shot forced him to move the woman
in a way
that exposed his shoulder even more, she left the maybe
off her last thought and
>knew the creature would fall.

>She easily dodged several more rounds before she raised her force
field again.
Part of her wanted to attempt the shot with no
outward protection, but she knew
>her objective at that point was to free the woman, not to test her
skill while
the woman's life hung in the balance. Several stray
shots to draw the creature's
>focus were then followed by two shots that tore off his arm and sent
him
spinning to the floor. The woman stumbled back against the
nearest wall, her
>path back down the corridor visible through the smoke.

>But she didn't move. She only stood there in a way that told her
rescuer that
her help was not only not appreciated, but had just
damaged whatever she was
>attempting to do.

>Sarge's mind spun with possibilities as she caught the distant sound
of running
feet.
>
Was this a trap? she thought. Maybe the woman's a decoy designed
to lead the
>unsuspecting to that cavern. Or maybe she's on an assignment of her
own. I don't
know everyone who's fighting for the resistance, but
maybe she was attempting to
>get herself captured so she could infiltrate this group. Or she
could be a scout
surveying the area for a group that's planning
to massacre its enemies.
>
The sound of running feet was coming closer.
>
Well, there's one sure way to find out, she thought.
>
She aimed her laser gauntlet at the woman's head. "Identify
yourself!"
>
The woman's angry expression was suddenly eclipsed by a
frightening smile as she
>stepped away from the wall and extended her arms to give Sarge the
biggest
possible target. Sarge lowered her gauntlet and stared
perplexed at the plea she
>saw on the woman's face, until they both turned at the sound of the
footsteps
that were coming from the direction of the cavern. The
woman shook her head
>disgustedly at her savior, then leaned back against the wall,
seemingly content
to wait until the reinforcements arrived.

>
After a curse over the time she'd spent to no avail, Sarge was
about to leave
>the woman to her chosen fate when she suddenly heard a crackling
rumble behind
her. But no sooner did she turn than she was struck
by a violet wave of

>concussive force that threw her half the distance between herself and the
woman who'd refused to be rescued. She rolled several feet before she came to
>rest in a smoking heap near the creature with the severed arm who was just then
attempting to stand.
>
Whoever had shot her had nearly paralyzed her. She was barely able to move, her
>mind was a haze of pain, and she was gasping for any air she could draw into her
burning lungs. But she was still conscious, and she could feel the icy hands
>that grabbed her and dragged her down the corridor. There was an exchange
between the creature whose arm she'd severed and whoever had come up on her
>silently from behind, but she couldn't follow any of it beyond the injured
creature's demand that he be allowed to kill her then and there, and the other's
>reply about her high sale price.

>After what seemed like an eternity, she was dragged into the cavern where her
senses were immediately assaulted by the overpowering scent of too many people,
>animals, and goods in one place. And she had enough of her vision, blurry though
it was, to see some of those causing the aroma. Around her were caged humans,
>chained animals, and piles of everything from clothes to food to complex
weaponry. And through it all was the endless talk of different creatures who
>seemed concerned with everything at once. The feel of constant motion made Sarge
think of that chaotic transportation stop that Cleo always talked about whenever
>they found themselves in a crowded area.

>Then, just as quickly as they'd assaulted her, the smells, sights, and sounds
were eclipsed as she was thrown into a room, relieved of her gauntlets, and
>kicked once in the side by the creature whose arm she'd severed. The woman she'd
attempted to save was thrown in with her before the reinforced door was slammed
>shut. Sarge made no attempt to rise as if she was still fast enough to
retaliate. She just laid there silently, assessing all that had happened.
>
They only stunned me, she thought, so they need me. And because she's been
>thrown in here with me they need her as well. All the goods indicate scavengers
who deal in anything of value. Our currency is only good if someone else wants
>it as payment, so otherwise we have to barter and exchange. And because many in
the underworld need slaves, these creatures will no doubt sell anyone they can
>get their hands on. Which explains why this place is so remote. Part of their
defense is their distance from any potential threat, and because there's only
>one way in, those who attempt theft or escape have only one way out.

>Feeling the mobility of her limbs returning, Sarge adjusted herself so she could
consider the dimensions of the room and its contents. As she expected, there was
>nothing that could act as a weapon in place of those that had been taken from
her, only some old metal barrels that might have once stored some form of non-
>toxic liquid, and some scattered clothing that had obviously been torn from
whoever had worn it. The ceiling, walls, and floor were

solid rock, and the only
>possible exit other than the door was a small barred opening carved
into the
high ceiling to allow air into the room. Here was a cell
designed not only
>to hold whoever might be thrown in, but also to rid those held of
any thoughts
of escape.
>
If pressed by immediate need, Sarge could have come up with
possible offensive
>and defensive uses for the clothing and barrels, but she reminded
herself that
her captors had thrown her in here alive because
they intended to come back for
>her, so it was best to use the time to devise the most effective
course of
action, once she got some answers from her fellow
captive. So she did her best
>to suppress her anger, then she turned to the woman who had only
identified
herself as a target.
>
The woman's shoulder-length hair was only a shade darker than
her sister
>Lily's, but it wasn't that feature that held Sarge's attention. It
was the
woman's luminous jade eyes. There was no longer any
distance or smoke from the
>firefight to hinder her vision, so Sarge could see the haunting orbs
that
watched her beneath the unmistakable expression of one who
had been defeated yet
>again. All traces of anger were gone. It was a look of self-pity
that made Sarge
want to slap her across the face the way she had
her own sister when she'd
>confronted the naive Lily in the Betrayer factory. She held herself
in check,
however, knowing that the more energy she expended on
this woman, the less she
>would have for her escape.

>She gets in my way then, she thought, I'll tear her a new mouth.

>Sarge dragged herself to a sitting position, her muscles rippling as
they flexed
beneath her grimy skin. She estimated about fifteen
minutes to be back at
>operable strength, minus the fatigue from the confrontation in the
corridor,
then she steadied herself with a slow deep breath,
knowing that Hel would
>have questioned this woman one way, Cleo another. Yet despite the
calm she'd
summoned, neither way appealed to her.
>
"What was all that about!?" Her expression confirmed that
silence in reply
>wasn't an option.

>The woman considered the reckless bravado she'd shown in the
corridor, but now
the short distance between them and the
knowledge she had of what this other
>woman could do were enough to set all other emotions except fear and
despair
aside. The latter won out as she lowered her eyes.

>
"I could ask you the same thing," she said.
>
Sarge's eyes narrowed. "You mean you wanted to be taken by those
creeps?"
>
The woman nodded. "Yes."
>
It was at that point that Hel would have taken a calm,
diplomatic approach to an
>inquiry into this woman's bleak circumstances, while Cleo would have
been
patiently sympathetic. But despite the influence her
teammates had on her, Sarge
>was still Sarge, and that was never more evident than when she took

her own line
of inquiry.

>
"What stupid reason possessed you to want that?!"

>
The woman saw that her interrogator's hands were curled into fists that could

>leave both her eyes the color of her dark hair.

>"I'm Kara," she said, her soft tone indicating that she would explain herself
with no additional incentive.

>
Sarge had no time for pleasantries. "I didn't ask who you are! Now tell me why

>you wanted to be taken!"

>Kara adjusted herself and scratched at the back of her neck as if the
humiliation of being denied her identity had only added to her discomfort.

>
"I was a member of a group of scavengers who lived as best we could on whatever

>we could find in this wasteland. Sometimes we were victims of thieves and
murderers. Sometimes one of us would be taken by the Bailies. Sometimes a

>renegade member would turn against us. But we survived it all until the day
we squatted one day too long in the ruins of a battle that had destroyed almost

>everything of value, even though that didn't stop another group of scavengers
from attacking us."

>
When Sarge had asked for an explanation, she hadn't had a life history in mind,

>but she allowed Kara to continue since her own strength and mobility hadn't
returned to the level she knew she needed. Another ten minutes would do it. But

>had she not been recovering, she would have already told Kara to cut to the
chase.

>
"We had no chance of defending ourselves, so our choices were escape or

>enslavement. These scavengers use their defeated foes like work animals. Some
still fought, but most ran. And I ran with them before we separated. We were

>supposed to meet after they'd given up the search, but when I arrived at the
location we'd decided on, I didn't find anyone. And I haven't found anyone alive

>since. I don't know what happened to the rest, but I do know there's no way I
can survive alone."

>
A tear fell from each of Kara's luminous jade eyes as she looked up at Sarge. "I

>was hoping these metal heads would put me out of my misery."

>Sarge's eye were aflame. "You gave yourself up hoping they would kill you?"

>Kara looked away when she spoke. "I gave myself up knowing they'd take me to
sell, but before I end up on a buyer's chain, I'll be such a nuisance that these

>creeps will finish me rather than deal with me."

>Sarge almost spat her words. The tragedies Kara knew were not lost on her, but
her death wish had drawn in an innocent. "So I ruined your suicide run. And I

>risked my life for someone who doesn't care about her own!"

>Kara's fatigued look was the only reply she offered, but at that point it was
enough. The strength Sarge had not yet regained was compensated for by the

>adrenaline that made her sweating temples throb. She cursed Cleo's talk of
heroes, and she cursed herself for not saving herself

when she'd seen with her
>own eyes that Kara hadn't wanted her help, only her firepower.

>And to think I actually speculated on noble reasons why she'd been
taken, Sarge
thought. She's no more an operative for anybody than
she is an ally in my
>pending attempt to escape.

>"If I had my laser gauntlet," she said, rising to her feet like a
jungle cat
ready to pounce, "I'd do the honors right here."

>
"Do me a favor," Kara whimpered.

>
"If you don't stay out of my way, I will, gauntlet or no
gauntlet. Now keep your
>mouth shut."

>Sarge turned and examined the room once again. She already knew that
the combat
potential of what lay around her was limited, so it
was best to arm herself once
>the creatures came for their captives.

>I'll set a trap with what they left me, she thought, delivering a
kick to one of
the metal barrels that bent almost in half from
the impact.

>
Kara watched doe-eyed as she dragged herself to the far corner
of the room. For

>someone who was ready to give up her life so easily moments before,
she didn't
seem that anxious to be on the receiving end of a kick
that could have done the

>job in one smooth motion to the head. And to guarantee that she
didn't lose the
effect of the kick, Sarge glared at Kara as if
she were the next target unless

>she continued to do as she was told. She then took several moments
to examine
the opening in the ceiling before she turned back to
her cellmate.

>
"I'm getting out of here when they come for us, and I'm going to
explain to you

>precisely how I'm going to do that so you don't give me away, which
I don't
imagine you'd do anyway because if you make points with
them, they may not kill

>you. But aside from that, you better not plan to fulfill your death
wish with
anything I'm going to do because I can make it the most
painful path

>imaginable."

>Kara sat there in rapt attention as Sarge explained what she'd come
up with in
far less time than it had taken Kara to realize there
were items in the room.

>Had she not dismissed Kara as nothing more than a potential
liability, Sarge
would have noticed the traces of admiration that
kept appearing on her face.

>
Not only has this woman who tried to rescue me displayed
recuperative powers and

>strength beyond anything I've ever seen, Kara thought, she's glanced
around the
room and come up with an escape plan that she intends
to carry out through the

>sheer force of her will. She must be a freedom fighter, and a great
one at that.

>Once Sarge finished her explanation, she sat silently on the floor
and focused
her mind's eye on the success of the plan she was
about to set in motion.

>
And as she watched the silent vigil from the far corner of the
room, Kara drew

>herself up into a similar sitting position, and waited for the

escape she was
certain would occur.

>
* * *

>
Less than one hour later, the door to the room opened and a creature armed with

>what appeared to be a laser cannon stepped into the room followed by two
comrades, each with two lengths of chain. All three stopped when they saw the

>blonde captive splayed on the floor. The brunette seemed to be on the verge of
insanity. She was shaking violently and staring doe-eyed at the body before her.

>The blonde woman had evidently fallen while trying to escape and had suffered a
severe injury. Several barrels lay as if they'd been stacked to reach the

>ceiling, only to fall before the climber could reach the opening. One barrel had
been crushed as if she'd fallen on it.

>
Though the two creatures with the chains looked at one another and shook their

>heads at such an idiotic plan of escape, the one with the cannon just stood
there motionless. He knew both had been valuable, but now there was little use

>for either of them, except of course to the most wretched of their customers
who would take a female body regardless of its condition. But those wretches

>never paid well since they knew they were taking otherwise unsellable items off
the hands of the merchants.

>
The creature with the cannon cursed violently, then he nodded to the woman in

>the corner before he walked over to bludgeon the blonde woman as a way of
punctuating his displeasure with the entire scene. But no sooner did the muzzle

>of his weapon come within three feet of the still form than her booted foot
lashed out, kicking the weapon from his hand, and sending it spinning up between

>them.

>The shock of being disarmed sent the creature back a step before Sarge kicked
him into the wall some ten feet away. She caught the weapon as her leg came down

>and drilled him with a laser shot that left a gaping hole in his chest. The two
who were about to chain Kara had barely turned before similar laser fire sent

>them rocketing into the wall over her head. She screamed hysterically and
crawled forward as the two smoking bodies sank to the floor like severed bags of

>trash.

>Sarge rolled out the door with a war cry that echoed through the cavern, then
shot at anything that offered a potential threat. Several guards attempted to

>return fire amidst directives from others, and cheers from the human captives,
but none of the assailants could aim at the lethal blur heading for the

>entrance.

>As she ran into the corridor, Sarge briefly regretted that she wasn't able to
free the slaves or bring down this market that dealt in human lives as easily as

>it dealt in animals and food. But such was the life she'd come to know, so she
steeled herself, and showered the entrance with laser fire while she backed away

>to safety. And though she also thought briefly of Kara, and knew that her cover
fire might give her a chance to escape whether she

wanted it or not, she also
>knew that Kara's emotional descent had led her to the edge of an
abyss that only
she could bring herself back from.
>
She's made her decision, Sarge thought. Now she'll have to live
with it, at
>least until someone gives her what she wants.

>* * *

>There's something about the camaraderie of war that binds allies
together in a
way that very few can speak of with the words it
deserves. Yet words aren't
>really necessary for those who know such camaraderie from
experience. And even
if it were possible to capture it with the
words it deserves, the explanation
>would most likely lack the immediacy and intensity of the moment
being
described.
>
And it was during such a moment that Hel and Sarge stood
side-by-side behind the
>rubble of a shattered wall acting as their barricade. They were in
the midst of
a raid on a group of mutants who'd been identified
as covert allies of the
>Bailies. Cleo was sitting between them doing her best not to be a
target. The
three of them had blown through the wall minutes
before in the hope that the
>surprise attack would give them and their allies enough time to cut
down the
numbers against them. Several mutants had already
fallen, but because the
>Bailies among them were much harder to eliminate, the latter had
drawn the
team's fire long enough for the remaining mutants to
run for cover.
>
"Are we winning?" Cleo asked, her voice barely audible over the
chaos.
>
"Just stay down!" Hel shouted, her no nonsense demeanor
sharpened by the
>conflict.

>"That means 'no,' doesn't it?" Cleo spoke as if she already knew the
answer.

>"It doesn't mean yes!" Sarge screamed, knowing that Hel wouldn't
reply with
anything other than a variation of the same demand.
Then she nailed two mutants
>and a Betrayer before she turned to Hel.

>"I'm gonna circle around the side!" She nodded to indicate a rising
walkway
partially hidden behind a row of stacked electrical
equipment. "At least one of
>us has to hit them from another direction!"

>Hel nodded, but she knew Sarge wasn't waiting for permission.

>"Is it that bad?" Cleo asked.

>As if in answer, concussive bursts from the arm weapons of a
Betrayer shattered
some of the rubble before them. Hel ducked
momentarily to avoid the flying
>shrapnel, and when she came even with Cleo, the newest member of the
trio put
her hands up and nodded.
>
"I know," she said. "Just stay down."
>
Hel gritted her teeth, stood back up, and shot the attacking
Betrayer in a tear
>across its leg. A quivering red electrical spasm suddenly surrounded
its body,
short-circuiting its motor skills, and sending it
face-first to the floor.
>
With only a moment to spare, Hel looked for Sarge and saw that
she was not only

>in place on the walkway, but was tearing into a Betrayer that stood not more
than a body length behind three mutants she'd already brought down, mutants who
>would have circled around on them had she not moved when she did.

>Good call, Sarge, Hel thought, returning to the fight before her. She saw laser
fire directed against their attackers from odd angles and knew her team's
>comrades were behind barricades of their own. It was sure to be a long and gory
confrontation, but at least her allies were positioned for offensive and
>defensive maneuvering. Any misjudgments or ill-used ammunition would be more
costly than usual, however, because the combined firepower of their opponents
>was well beyond their own.

>Then, just as Hel banished thoughts of what the odds could ultimately mean, she
saw the far wall explode inward as if to mimic her team's entrance. Four mutants
>were immediately crushed. And through the haze of smoke and debris came laser
fire that didn't seem to have any target except whatever was moving in the room.
>
Cleo was about to ask what happened, but she reigned herself in, knowing that
>whatever it was wouldn't be slowed or helped by her distraction. Hel and Sarge
kept up their assault, as did their comrades, but all kept an eye out for
>whoever or whatever had just arrived. Fortunately, the arrival drew the enemy's
eyes as well, then it drew their fire as a team of five humans ran into the room
>with weapons flaring.

>Sarge's voice came over Hel's comm-link. "Do you know who are they?"

>Hel spoke as she nailed her fifth mutant. "No, but their aim couldn't be
better."
>
A hesitant voice rose up from below. "Hel?"
>
"Yes, Cleo. That's good."
>
The excited giggle that followed made Hel grin.
>
Though the intensity of the team's assault had still made victory possible, the
>appearance of the five humans not only increased the possibility, it also gave
the team more firepower, firepower that tore through their enemies as the new
>arrivals dug in for a final assault. One of the latter who was wielding a
simple, yet still effective weapon ran along the walkway behind the stack of
>electrical equipment until she was able to double Sarge's attack against the
last of the mutants in that section of the room.

>
Because of the poor visibility, however, Sarge didn't see the runner approach
>until she heard booted feet moving in her direction. With her adrenaline
surging, she sent three laser shots through the chest of yet another mutant
>before she turned, leveling her gauntlet at whoever had dared to come after her.

>One shot at point blank range should do it, she thought.

>Then, as she triggered her gauntlet, she saw a pair of luminous jade eyes
through the smoke, and willed the shot back, but it was too late. The shot

>sliced through the air like a hot knife thrown at the exposed chest
of a
criminal about to be executed.
>
But the force field that went up in the blink of an eye
deflected the shot away
>just as the now protected warrior turned, and disabled a Betrayer
with a laser
shot directed right into the barrel of its smoking
arm cannon.
>
"I deserve that!" Kara shouted.
>
Sarge nodded, but not in agreement. She was blessing the look of
unwavering
>determination that matched her own.

>
The End
>

End
file.